

HB5429 is both too undefined and deeply flawed and must not be passed, regardless of its laudable objectives.

Mandating that Zoning regulations be passed to allow as-of-right highly dense development within 1/2 mile radius of passenger train stations and rapid transit bus stations would impose an undue burden on most municipalities, and jeopardize both environmental and historical assets, much of which falls within that radius.

The Town of Fairfield Planning Director has estimated that our Town could sustain an increase of up to 30% of its housing stock and an increase in population of up to 17%, packed into areas which already have aging infrastructure and are subject to routine flooding.

The bill exempts certain types of land (wetlands for example) from its reach but the ultimate calculation of included versus excluded land isn't defined adequately. This vagueness makes it impossible to determine the exact impact, and Towns should not have to wait until after passage to find out how and where the density will be mandated.

The land listed as exempt from the bill has several questionable omissions. For example, the bill exempts land not serviced by public sewers, but it would not exempt land with inadequate sewer capacity, leaving it to already strapped municipalities to fund major public works projects to expand sewer and other infrastructure capacity.

This Bill HB 5429 is the taking away of the right to be heard by residents of our State. By mandating as-of-right processing of dense development applications, the bill would strip away public hearings, leaving important land use decisions to be essentially 'rubber stamped' by town department staff. In so doing this bill would silence the voices of the public. It would also appear to conflict with the intent and public policy behind CEPA by severely restricting the right of all State residents to intervene to raise environmental and historical issues under Connecticut's 22a-19 intervention statute.

Finally, the bill does not address or attempt to solve the problem of affordable housing, only requiring 10% be affordable (and even the 10% only applies to developments of 6 or more units). This could result in a 'free-for-all' of development of luxury town houses replacing modest 'organic' affordable and 'middle' housing. This would further erode the goal of providing affordable housing for disadvantaged State residents.

This Bill 5429 is NOT about Affordable Housing BUT Financial greed and benefits only the developer.

I urge you to vote NO on HB5429.

**Respectfully,
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